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Summer 2008

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Connections

Newsletter of the
Florida Commission on the Status
of Women

Dear Kelly,

Welcome to the Summer 2008 edition of FCSW Connections, the e-newsletter of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women. We sincerely hope that you will find this publication a useful and informative resource. Please share with us your thoughts and suggestions by e-mailing us at info@fcsw.net.

Message from the Chair, Claudia Kirk Barto



As summer winds down and we get back into the routine of fall, the Florida Commission on the Status of Women is gearing up for an exciting event.

The Commission is proud to announce the launch of the [Florida Conference for Women](#), slated for May 12, 2009 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL. The one-day, non-partisan education and networking event will bring together thousands from across Florida to tackle the issues that matter most to women and empower them to impact meaningful change in their professional lives.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

2008 Legislative Wrap-Up

By Janet Mabry, Legislative Committee Chair

The Legislative Committee of the Florida Commission on the Status of Women is proud to present the [2008 Summary of Florida Laws Affecting Women and Families](#), an annual publication designed to encourage women

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from across the state to become educated about the legislative process and new laws that affect Florida's families.

The 2008 session of the Florida Legislature was dominated by the demands of a shrinking budget. Already strapped by cuts made in an earlier special session, many bills with a fiscal impact were simply not heard in either the House or the Senate.

Although this Legislative session was marked primarily by bills not passed the Legislature did address a number of other issues. In the area of education, it reduced the emphasis of FCAT results in high school grades and moved the exam dates later into the year. It also strengthened penalties for misconduct in relation to teacher ethics. Middle schools will be required to provide 30 minutes of physical education a week. And it also passed an anti-bullying law that requires schools to ban harassment of students.

In the area of insurance the Legislature created a low-cost insurance plan for low-income Floridians. The legislature continued to fine tune the property insurance reform started in the 07 session.

The 2008 Summary of Florida Laws Affecting Women and Families is available on the Commission's website, www.fcsw.net. Histories, committee analyses and voting records on all of the bills included in this summary can be obtained by visiting www.myfloridahouse.gov or www.flsenate.gov.

Commission Honors Outstanding Women

[by Thelma V. Crump, Awards and Recognition Committee Chair](#)



The Florida Commission on the Status of Women honored Rosie Andre, Micheline Louis Charles, Jane J. Herron, Tania Lopez, Sandra Merritt, and Venghan (Winnie) Tang with a FCSW Florida Achievement Award for their work in improving the lives of women and families in their communities. They received recognition in a special afternoon ceremony during the second quarterly meeting of the Commission on Saturday, June 7, 2008, at the Law Offices of Gunster Yoakley, PA in West Palm Beach, Florida.

The Commission will also be recognizing Rev. Dr. Betsy Goehrig of Riverview, FL and Barbara B. Newlin of Spring Hill, FL in a special afternoon ceremony during the third quarterly meeting of the Commission on Friday, September 12, 2008, 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Florida Southern College, President's Dining Room, Lakeland, Florida.

In addition to the Achievement Award from the Commission, each of the FCSW Achievement Award recipients will receive a congratulatory letter from Governor Charlie Crist.

The Commission chose all of these outstanding women for their contribution to their communities. They have made their lives out of giving to others. The passion and dedication they bring to their communities clearly show in the hours they put in, the results they get, and the admiration of their peers. Our state is a significantly better place because they are here. We are lucky to have them in our communities.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

2008 - 2009 Florida Women's Hall of Fame Underway

by Carrie Estevez Lee, Women's Hall of Fame Committee Chair



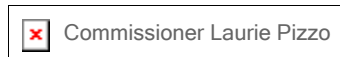
As the Florida Commission on the Status of Women continues its service to the women of the State of Florida, we are honored to begin the process of selecting the 2008/2009 nominees for the Florida Women's Hall of Fame. This annual event celebrating the accomplishments of outstanding Florida women is scheduled for Tuesday, March 17, 2009 at the Florida State Capitol in Tallahassee. Held in conjunction with Women's History Month, the Hall of Fame commemorates women's history by honoring and remembering those women whose lives and contributions have positively affected both Florida and the nation.

Since 1982 distinguished women of Florida have been nominated by the citizens and selected by the governor for this prestigious designation. As officially mandated by the Florida Legislature in 1992, the Florida Women's Hall of Fame recognizes and honors those women who, through their work and dedication have made significant improvements to the lives of women and to all the citizens of Florida.

[READ MORE HERE](#)

Commissioners Educate Public About Cybercrime

by Commissioner Laurie Pizzo



As the focus of the FCSW's mission is to empower women from all walks of life in achieving their fullest potential, the topic of Internet safety is essential to today's women as they endeavor to protect themselves, their children and their families from the potential dangers on the Internet. The Commission's 2007 Annual Report "[Smart Surfing: Protecting You and Your Family From Cybercrime,](#)" was created to raise awareness about the need for women to have the knowledge and skills to protect themselves and their families from many types of computer crimes. The report features information from [Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum's CyberCrime Unit](#) and serves as a resource on Internet safety for Florida's women.

Last June I was privileged to give my first Cybercrime prevention presentation to a Grandparents support group at Spring Hill Elementary located in Hernando County, Florida. Many of the attendees were familiar with a computer and the Internet, however, several indicated they had never been on a computer and had no desire to learn. This makes the mission of the Commission's Cybercrime education program even more important as these Grandparents are raising children who are being exposed to a world of sex, drugs, gambling right in their own homes with little to no adult oversight.

The attendees were like sponges constantly bombarding me with questions regarding keeping kids safe on the Internet. They were very grateful to have the [Annual Report](#) from the FCSW as a tool to use in helping their grandchildren safe from the dangers of the Internet.

I am looking forward to going back this fall for a presentation geared to elementary aged students. It will be a very busy 2008/2009 school year as many schools are eager to get this important information to their students.

For more information on have a Cybersafety presentation at your school, for adults or children, please contact the FCSW office at 850-414-3300.

FCSW Recognized at National Convention

by Michele Manning, FCSW Staff

The Florida Commission on the Status of Women was recognized by the National Association of Commissions for Women (NACW) during its 39th Annual Convention for its participation in the *Healthy Bones* educational program, designed to reduce the debilitating effects of fractures resulting from osteoporosis in women. The FCSW held screenings and distributed information on osteoporosis at health fairs throughout the year. Nationally, more than 80,000 women across the country were screened by NACW members and received vital information on osteoporosis.

The FCSW was also honored for its innovative work toward improving lives of women, children and families through the [2007 Annual Report Smart Surfing: Protecting You and Your Family from Cybercrime](#). The report was written as yet another step forward in these ongoing efforts to keep our children safe as they explore the Internet and use today's technologies.

Michele Manning, a member of the FCSW staff attended the Convention held July 16-19, 2008 at the historic Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Hosted by the New Mexico Commission on the Status of Women, the convention theme was "Girls of Today--- Women of Tomorrow." The annual NACW convention is an ideal opportunity to network with colleagues from across the country, expand knowledge on issues impacting women and share programs that reflect the issues that impact women today.

Sincerely,

Kelly Sciba
Florida Commission on the Status of Women

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